

**For Immediate Release**

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**HOUSE PASSES HERSETH SANDLIN LEGISLATION TO EXPAND USE OF SATELLITE IMAGERY AT EROS DATA CENTER**

***Legislation Creates Career Opportunities for South Dakotans Interested in Science and Research; Assists in Disaster Mitigation and Homeland Security Efforts***

**Washington, DC {October 27, 2009}-** Today, the House of Representatives voted to pass H.R. 2489, the National Land Remote Sensing Outreach Act, bipartisan legislation introduced by Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin and leading co-sponsor Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-OH), which would authorize a program at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to enhance the use of geospatial images for research and education. The collected data, archived at the USGS Earth Resources Observation Data Center near Sioux Falls, would be put to work nationwide to promote science education projects, calculate drought effects, design irrigation protocols, and plan flooding responses for various states.

“The bipartisan legislation approved in the House today will not only help in our efforts to respond to natural disasters and homeland security threats, it will also help to create education and job opportunities for young South Dakotans interested in pursuing high-paying careers at the EROS Data Center near Sioux Falls, Rep. Herseth Sandlin said, “I’m pleased that my colleagues in the House recognized the tremendous potential of this legislation by overwhelmingly supporting its passage.”

Over the years, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has provided satellite data and grants to AmericaView, a nonprofit organization, to help citizens, researchers, and public agencies solve real world problems using satellite imagery. In turn, AmericaView has supported a network of university partners now in a total of 36 states: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa , Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada , New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Texas, Utah , Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

“As a nation faced with many diverse challenges, our need to utilize the wealth of objective scientific information provided by civilian satellite data has never been greater,” said AmericaView Executive Director Rick Landenberger. “Among other important issues, this Act takes significant strides in promoting geospatial education, training, and applied research, ensuring that a highly trained workforce is in place to utilize the data on a broad scale, at a time when informed, objective decisions are absolutely critical.”

Mary O'Neill, South Dakota View Principal Investigator, said "Passage of the Land Remote Sensing Outreach Act in the House is wonderful news for South Dakota and the other 35 states that are currently part of the AmericaView Consortium. We are extremely grateful to Rep. Herseth Sandlin for her sponsorship of this legislation and to Reps. LaTourette and Sarbanes for their co-sponsorship. We look forward to the expanded efforts this legislation will enable in the areas of remote sensing education, outreach, and applied research. Students, teachers, farmers, state and federal agencies, tribal governments, natural resource managers, disaster workers, and many others will be the ultimate beneficiaries of this legislation as we work side-by-side, showing them how remote sensing can be used to do their tasks more quickly, efficiently and cost-effectively."

AmericaView is a nationwide program that focuses on satellite remote sensing data and technologies in support of applied research, K-16 education, workforce development, and technology transfer. AmericaView is administered through a partnership between the U.S. Geological Survey and the AmericaView Consortium, which is comprised of over 30 "StateViews." The consortium is the federal government's primary partner in achieving the program's vision and goals. Specifically, applied researchers at universities in each member state collaborates with each other and with government agencies to develop and share information and techniques for using remote sensing data.

Senator Tim Johnson and George Voinovich (R-OH) have introduced similar legislation in the Senate.

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